

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 INT-05 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /078 W

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R 212141Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4049

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 5051

FOR ARA/LA/MRSD O'GRADY - PASS TO AFL-CIO

E. O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, ELAB

SUBJECT: GOC ARRESTS SEVEN LABOR LEADERS

1. SUMMARY: GOC JULY 18 REPORTEDLY ARRESTED TWO NATIONAL LEADERS OF COPPER WORKERS CONFEDERATION (CTC) AND FIVE (FOUR OF THESE CONFIRMED) LEADERS OF AFFILIATE UNIONS ON CHARGES OF PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL MEETINGS AND VIOLATION OF NORMAL 1 A.M. TO 5:30 A.M. CURFEW.

2. ARRESTS WERE MADE IN THREE TOWNS OF ELSALVADOR COPPER MINE COMPLEX IN NORTH-CENTRAL CHILE. SEVERAL LEADERS WERE ARRESTED FROM HOMES AND REPORTEDLY HAD NEITHER VIOLATED CURFEW NOR PARTICIPATED IN MEETINGS. ALL HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM SITES OF ARREST TO PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF COPIAPO, AND REPORTEDLY WILL SHORTLY BE REMOVED TO TRES ALAMOS DETENTION CENTER NEAR SANTIAGO. ARRESTS APPEAR TO BE LOCAL INITIATIVE. END SUMMARY.

3. CTC PRESIDENT GUILLERMO SANTANA TOLD LABATT EVENING JULY 18 THAT HE HAD CONFIRMED REPORTS FROM EL SAVADOR MINING COMPLEX (COBRESAL) THAT SIX COPPER UNION LEADERS AND "FOUR OR FIVE" COPPER WORKERS HAD BEEN ARRESTED FOR VIOLATING CURFEW AND PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL MEETINGS. SANTANA REPORTED
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A SEVENTH LEADER WAS PROBABLY ARRESTED.

4. ACCORDING TO REPORT, LUIS VILLENA ARRELLANO, CHRISTINA DEOMCRAT (PDC) AND GEN. SEC OF CTC; AND AMADOR AHUMADA SAPAIN, COMMUNIST (PC) AND CTC DIRECTOR, WERE AMONG DETAINED. OTHER LEADERS WERE OFFICERS OF LOCAL SALVADOR UNIONS, WHILE WORKERS ARE POTRERILLOS MINERS.

5. REPORTS INDICATE THAT VILLENA AND THE UNION MEMBERS WERE ARRESTED AFTER LEAVING POTRERILLOS SOCIAL CLUB SHORTLY AFTER CURFEW EARLY MORNING JULY 18. AHUMADA WAS TAKEN FROM HOME IN SALVADOR (SEPARATE TWON) SEVERAL HOURS LATER AND ARNOLDO CORTES (PC), PRES. OF POTRERILLOS UNION, WAS DETAINED THAT AFTERNOON. TWO LEADERS (PDC AND SOCIALIST-PS) OF BARQUITOS (CODELCO PORT MAY MILES DISTANT FROM POTRERILLOS AND SALVADOR) UNIONS WERE ARRESTED FROM HOMES EARLY HOURS SAME MORNING.

6. SANTANA UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO COMMUNICATE WITH INTENDANT OF COPIAPO, LT. COL. ALVAREZ, WHERE ALL DETAINEES WERE TRANSFERRED ON DAY OF ARRESTS. COPIAPO PROSECUTOR (FISCAL) INFORMED HIM THAT ALL WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO TRES ALAMOS DETENTION CENTER NEAR SANTIAGO "WITHIN FEW DAYS". FISCAL REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THIS TRANSFER WOULD BE TO ADVANTAGE OF DETAINEES, "SINCE CTC LEADERS WOULD NOT HAVE TO DEAL WITH ALVAREZ TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE". SANTANA HAS ARRANGED JULY 21 MEETING WITH LABOR MINISTER AND IS ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT GOC SEC GEN BEJARES TO NEGOTIATE RELEASE.

7. SANTANA CLAIMS THAT MAJORITY OF LEADERS WERE ARRESTED FROM HOMES IN TOWNS REMOVED FROM POTRERILLOS AND CONSEQUENTLY WERE NEITHER VIOLATING CURFEW NOR PARTICIPATING IN VILLENA'S SOCIAL CLUB MEETING. HE ATTRIBUTES ARRESTS TO INTENDENT ALVAREZ, WHO HE DESCRIBES AS "HARD (CURO)".

8. COMMENT: BASED ON AVAILABLE INFORMATION, SEPARATED LOCALES AND CLOSE TIMING OF ARRESTS, AND ON COL. ALVAREZ' HARD-LINE REPUTATION, WE TEND TO AGREE WITH SANTANA'S BELIEF THAT ARRESTS ARE ALVAREZ' RESPONSIBILITY. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT EITHER LABOR MINISTER OR OTHER HIGH LEVEL GOC OFFICIALS ARE INVOLVED. TOP LEVELS HAVE NORMALLY SHOWN RELATIVE DEFERENCE TOWARD LEADERS OF "BIG THREE" COPPER UNIONS. IF GOC WERE OUT TO PURGE
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CTC IT PRESUMABLY WOULD HAVE ALSO HIT OTHER TWO MAJOR MINES (EL TENIENTE AND CHUQUICAMATE), AND PROBABLY ALSO DETAINED GOVERNMENT'S MAJOR NEMESIS, SANTANA.
THOMPSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARRESTS, POLITICAL PRISONERS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANTIA05051
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750251-1109
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750736/aaaabgqi.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOC ARRESTS SEVEN LABOR LEADERS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, CI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006